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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/975,139	10/10/2001	Volker Schellenberger	23623-7060	8883

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EXAMINER

MAHATAN, CHANNING

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1631

DATE MAILED: 06/25/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

349

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/975,139

Applicant(s)

SCHELLENBERGER ET AL.

Examiner

Channing S Mahatan

Art Unit

1631

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6,11,14-23,25-29 and 31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 7 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6,11,14-23,25-29 and 31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,11,14-23,25-29 and 31 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 October 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

APPLICANTS' ARGUMENTS

Applicants' arguments, filed 13 April 2004, have been fully considered but they are not deemed to be persuasive. Rejections and/or objections not reiterated from previous office actions are hereby withdrawn. The following rejections and/or objections are either reiterated or newly applied. They constitute the complete set presently being applied to the instant application.

CLAIMS UNDER EXAMINATION

Claims herein under examination are claims 1-6, 11, 14-23, 25-29, and 31.

This application contains claim 11, which is drawn to an invention non-elected with traverse in the reply filed on 03 November 2003. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancellation of the non-elected claim or other appropriate action (37 C.F.R. § 1.144) See M.P.E.P. § 821.01. It should be noted in the 'Remarks' section (page 6, line 12) of response filed 13 April 2004 states "Claim 7 has been cancelled without prejudice", however, the 'Listing of Claims, Showing the Statues of Each Claim' indicates claim 7 as pending.

Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 112 2nd Paragraph

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 11, 23, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

VAGUE AND INDEFINITE

Claim 11 is indefinite due to the lack of clarity of the claim language failing to recite a final process step, which agrees back with the preamble. The preamble states that it is “A method for creating libraries of nucleic acid sequences that encode variants of a protein”, however, the claim recites a final limitation: “(c) a constraint vector, wherein said constraint vector is generated by a computer”. There is no indication that libraries of nucleic acid sequences is intended to be created as recited in the preamble. While minor details are not required in method/process claims, at least the basic step must be recited in a positive, active fashion. The claim does not set forth the conditions/state when the libraries of nucleic acid sequences that encode variants of a protein is created. Clarification of the metes and bounds of the claim is requested via clearer claim wording.

Claim 11 has been amended to recite in the preamble “A method for creating libraries of nucleic acid sequences that encode variants of a protein, said system comprising:” which is confusing. It is unclear if Applicants’ intend the claim to be directed to a method or a system. If the claim is directed to a method, absent are the steps to perform such method; wherein only elements of “an initial nucleic acid sequence”, “probability matrix”, and “constraint vector” are recited. Clarification of the metes and bounds, via clearer claim language, is requested.

Claims 23 and 24 have been amended to recited “the probability matrix is generated using an algorithm”/“the constraint vector is generated using an algorithm” which is vague and indefinite. It is unclear the algorithm and/or steps for the generation of a probability matrix and/or constraint vector. Applicants can resolve this issue by pointing out the algorithm referred

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to for the generation of the probability matrix and/or constraint vector is intended to encompass.

Clarification of the metes and bounds, via clearer claim language, is requested.

Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The rejection of claims 1-6, 11, 14-29, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Marr et al. (U.S. Patent Number 5,701,256) are maintained for reasons of record.

Applicants argue Marr et al. fails to teach how to generate libraries, particularly libraries in which substitutions of interest are incorporated into the libraries. However, this is not agreed with.

Marr et al. describes substitution matrices (i.e. point-accepted mutation; PAM) and the application of said matrices relative to their invention (Columns 1-4, beginning on line 40), indicating that such matrices represent models/schemes of amino acid substitutions that have been extrapolated by mutational comparisons. The inventors then go on to state that:

“The invention method is applicable to sequence comparisons based on either similarity (e.g., scores assigned according to chemical properties of the twenty amino acids) or distance (e.g., the number of insertions, deletions or substitution required to mutate one sequence fragment to another).” (Column 4, lines 57-62)

Finally, Marr et al. indicates such information is then transferred to a DNA library for construction (Columns 12-14, beginning on line 63). Thus, Marr et al. anticipates the claimed invention, particularly for the generation of libraries with substitutions. Further, Applicants’ claimed invention simply states that a library is constructed with substitutions without additional specific steps for the generation of said library.

No Claims Are Allowed.

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ACTION IS FINAL, NECESSITATED BY AMENDMENT

Applicants' amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See M.P.E.P. § 706.07(a). Applicants are reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

EXAMINER INFORMATION

Papers related to this application may be submitted to Technical Center 1600 by facsimile transmission. Papers should be faxed to Technical Center 1600 via the PTO Fax Center located in Crystal Mall 1. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notices published in the Official Gazette, 1096 OG 30 (November 15, 1988), 1156 OG 61 (November 16, 1993), and 1157 OG 94 (December 28, 1993) (See 37 C.F.R. § 1.6(d)). The CM1 Fax Center number is either (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Channing S. Mahatan whose telephone number is (571) 272-0717. The Examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:30-5:00).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael P. Woodward, Ph.D., can be reached on (571) 272-0722.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

Patent applicants with problems or questions regarding electronic images that can be viewed in the Patent Application Information Retrieval system (PAIR) can now contact the USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center (Patent EBC) for assistance. Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight (EST). The toll free number is (866) 217-9197. When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify Applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet. The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables Applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public.

For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.

Date: *June 21, 2004*
Examiner Initials: *CSM*

Marianne P. Allen
MARIANNE P. ALLEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Art 1631
6/22/04